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25 May 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Document Division, OCR

SUBJECT: Analysis of Returns on NIE Questionnaires

1. Pursuant to our conversation of yesterday, I have prepared a list of the various types of information which I believe should be extracted from the questionnaires. This list is based on the assumption that we can have the data punched on IBM cards. Two copies of the list are attached.
2. You will note that part of the list will require the reduction of the replies to a net number of respondents. This may be difficult to do since the questionnaire itself does not provide for the elimination of duplicates. However, such a distinction would be desirable in summarizing the answers to the more general questions. The duplication is quite acceptable in the answers that apply to specific NIE's. Since your office has already carefully listed the respondents, perhaps this problem will not be insurmountable.
3. You will note in the attached blank copies of the questionnaire that, for convenience, I have assigned a numerical designator to each of the questions. The IBM programmer may wish to change these designations and add others for the NIE number, office, etc.
4. When you have had a chance to study the list, I propose that we meet with the Chief of the Machine Division or some other knowledgeable person who can advise us further on the feasibility of programming these questions for machine processing. I will appreciate any suggestions you may have for changes or additions to the list.
5. In a few cases, written comments were submitted or perhaps entered on the questionnaire itself. I suggest we assemble these and consider them separately.
6. In the meantime, I shall proceed with an analysis of the agency questionnaires.

Special Assistant for Planning
Office of National Estimates

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Attachment

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Attachment
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NIE Distribution Survey, Phase II

Information to be extracted
from NIE Questionnaires

I. General

- a. Number of replies
 - (1) By agency
 - (2) By agency for each NIE
 - (3) Total for each NIE
 - (4) Total for all NIE's

II. Number of Replies by Item

- a. Number of items checked under each question.
- b. In each case show percentage of those answering the question who checked each item.
- c. If feasible, list written replies under 1 (f), 2 (b), 5 (f) and the number of months given in 10 (b).

III. Number of Replies by Individual Estimates

- a. Give the number of items checked under each of the following questions for each NIE separately:
 - 6, 7, 8, and 9
- b. In each case show percentage of those answering question who check^{ed} each item.

IV. Number of Individual Respondents

The purpose of this section is to count only once those persons who may have answered more than one questionnaire. It may be possible to determine by inspection how significant the duplication may be. It is desired that we present a net figure if this does not require an unacceptable effort.

- a. Total number of individual respondents.
- b. Number of responses (eliminating duplicates) to each item under questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 10.
- c. Percentages for each item, as above.
- d. In addition to the general division of respondents reflected in question 1, ascertain, if possible, from the data given under "Position of User" the levels of official responsibility from which the replies have been received.

V. Special Groupings

- a. Number and percentage of respondents to 1 (a), by item, who checked individual items in questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9.
- b. The same for respondents to 1 (b), 1 (c), and 1 (e).

Date of this response

NIE Number _____

Copy Number _____

Position of the User: _____
Descriptive Title Office

// My professional responsibilities are mainly in the field of (Check one)

- (a) policy planning and coordination
- (b) operations
- (c) intelligence
- (d) keeping my superior informed
- (e) research
- (f) _____

(Other: please specify)

2, My substantive responsibilities are (Check one)

- (a) general in scope
- (b) primarily concerned with matters involving _____

(indicate country, regional or
functional specialization)

3, I normally see, or am briefed on (Check one)

- (a) all NIEs
- (b) all NIEs bearing on my special responsibilities
- (c) only NIEs specifically requested by me or brought to my attention

4, As a rule, I (Check one)

- (a) rely primarily on briefings to keep myself informed on the content of NIEs
- (b) read NIE Conclusions only
- (c) read the entire NIE myself
- (d) read NIEs primarily in order to brief a superior

I first learned of the present NIE (Check one)

- (a) on receiving it
- (b) through USIB Committee papers
- (c) through reference to NIE files, the NIE index, or other reference service
- (d) through reference to it by a professional colleague
- (e) through participation in its preparation
- (f) through other means (specify)

I am using this estimate (Check one)

- (a) in connection with actions on its subject now before my office
- (b) for purposes of briefing a superior
- (c) for background information

The value of this estimate for my purposes is (Check one)

- (a) major
- (b) moderate
- (c) little
- (d) none

I expect that I will cite, quote, or summarize this estimate (Check one)

- (a) in papers prepared in my office
- (b) in coordination of other papers and other discussions
- (c) seldom, if ever

I expect that I will probably (Check one)

- (a) not refer to this estimate again
- (b) refer to it frequently in the future
- (c) refer to it once or twice in the future

I regard estimates as useful and dependable (Check one)

- (a) only at the time they are issued
- (b) only for the first _____ months or so after issuance
- (c) until superseded
- (d) there is no general rule; it depends on the particular estimate

This copy will be retained in _____ personal files. (Circle one)

office

central

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An analysis of the returns from the 636 individual respondents reveals that 320 of them, or 50%, are engaged in intelligence, 123 or 19%, have responsibilities in policy planning and coordination, and 48, or 8%, are in operations. Only 44, or 7%, listed themselves in the area of research.

A substantial majority of the readers (60%) consider themselves specialists— area or functional -- and some 40% have substantial responsibilities which are general in scope. This division is also reflected in the fact that the largest number (47%) see or are briefed on only those NIE's which bear on their special responsibilities. The number who read all NIE's (39%) is almost identical with the number who list themselves as generalists. About 14% see only those NIE's which they specifically request or which are brought to their attention.

The NIE reading practises of this group of respondents rather definitely shows that a majority (59%) read the entire NIE themselves. However, a very substantial number (34%) read only the conclusions. As might be expected the percentage that relies primarily on briefings of NIE's is very small -- only 3%. It is a coincidence that the same percentage read NIE's primarily to brief their superiors.

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Very few (only 1%) regard estimates as useful and dependable only at the time they are issued. A *substantial* number (23%) regard them so until they are superseded. The great majority, however, some 70%, do not apply any general rule as to the continuing validity of our estimate, making their decision depend on the particular estimate. A small number (5%) consider the estimates valid for a specified number of months.

A closer examination of the returns reveals, as might be expected, that those who consider themselves "policy planners" are most frequently also generalists who read all NIE's. About half of them read the entire paper, the other half, only the conclusions. The intelligence respondents tend very strongly toward specialization and are inclined to read entire NIE's in their own areas. The operatives and research respondents are also very largely specialists who read entire NIE's in their own areas of interest.

A number of the questions were concerned with reactions to the specific estimate in hand. For the analysis of their replies, we turn to the gross number of responses (1037). The 1956 report stated that NIE's were more generally used for background purposes. This pattern is confirmed in the present study which shows that 83% of the respondents were using them in this way. The percentage for operatives and research users tended to be even higher (92% and 95%) and for intelligence officers (79%) somewhat lower than the average.

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Although the large percentages using NIE's for background purposes are probably to be expected, it is significant that 13% of the policy planners and intelligence officers indicated that the estimates in question (a total of 90 instances) were being used in connection with actions on the subject that were then before their offices. The highest score in this respect was achieved by NIE 11-8-59* with 28 respondents (21%) giving this reply. This estimate was also ^{rated} noted of major importance for their purpose by 53% of the respondents. NIE 11-6-59 and NIE 70-59 followed rather far behind NIE 11-8-59, but with significant scores. In each of these categories these estimates received identical percentages of 14% and 33% respectively.

* See Tab -- for list of NIE's by subject.

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The NIE readers were asked to indicate the value of each of the estimates for their purposes. Although these replies unfortunately cannot be correlated with the special area interests of the respondents, it is significant, nevertheless, that 28% rated them as of major importance and 50% of moderate importance for their purposes. Only 18% said they were of little importance. There were scattered other opinions. The policy planners as a group rated these NIE's rather higher than the average, citing 30% as of major importance and 53% as of moderate importance for their purposes. Almost half of the respondents indicated that they expected to cite, quote, or summarize the estimate in question in papers prepared in their offices or in the coordination of other papers and discussions. Almost an equal number rated that they would seldom, if ever, have occasion to use the estimate in this way. In response to a somewhat question 26% indicated that they would probably not refer to the estimate again, 25% that they would refer to it frequently in the future and 48% that they would refer to it once or twice in the future.

In order to determine whether readers retained NIE's for their personal use or sent them to a central file, they were queried on this subject with the following results. Only 2% retain them in their personal files. The great majority (57%) keep them in their office files and a substantial number (36%) return them to the central files.

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2. Composition of the Sample

Approximately 10% of the initial basic distribution of NIE's is allocated to non-USIB agencies or individuals. The division of replies between this group and the USIB recipients was very close to the proportion of NIE's received by each group. Among the USIB agencies themselves, however, all of the agencies with the exception of ACSI turned in either the same or a smaller percentage of replies than their percentage allotment of NIE's. ACSI, however, the largest consumer after CIA, although receiving only about 17% of the NIE's provided 36% of the responses.

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II. Analysis of Returns for Questionnaires

The number of completed questionnaires (1037) received from 636 individual respondents probably represents a very small percentage of the average number of NIE readers. If only one response had been received for each of the seven NIE's distributed in the initial basic dissemination, the total would have been 2604 or $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the number actually received. Or put another way, we received an average of 148 replies for each NIE, which is about 40% of the number of NIE's initially distributed. If it is assumed that each NIE is seen by a number of different people, and if the large supplementary distribution of some of these NIE's is added, it is apparent that the returns may in fact represent considerably less than 10% of the NIE readership. Even such a response is probably larger than could have been expected if addressed to the general public or to some outside organization. In view of the simplicity of the questionnaire, the various reminders given, and the ample time allowed, it cannot be considered an adequate response from the employee group addressed.

A larger response would obviously have been desirable; however, the size of the sample by itself need not preclude some assessment of the answers given to the various lines of inquiry. Although some generalizations can be made regarding the composition of the sample, the levels and kinds of responsibilities of the respondents cannot be established with any precision. In other words, this inquiry was not

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conducted as a scientific poll of the NIE readership, allocating the blanks to different groups in accordance with some predetermined pattern. It was an across-the-board inquiry open to all NIE readers without distinction. The results should be read with this qualification in mind.

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